

Message Text

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PAGE 01 NEW DE 12713 241335Z

42

ACTION NEA-16

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 AGR-20 SPM-01 SWF-02 EB-11 IGA-02

AID-20 IO-14 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-11 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20

USIA-15 COME-00 OMB-01 TRSE-00 DRC-01 ARA-16 FDRE-00

/205 W

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R 231540Z SEP 74

FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4061

INFO AMEMBASSY DACCA

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU

AMCONSUL BOMBAY

AMCONSUL CALCUTTA

AMCONSUL MADRAS

AMEMBASSY VIENNA

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VIENNA FOR MOYNIHAN

PASS AGRICULTURE

E. O. 11652: N/ANP

TAGS: EAGR, IN

SUBJECT: INDIAN FOODGRAIN SITUATION

REF: NEW DELHI 12374

SUMMARY: NO SUBSTANTIAL CHANGE TOOK PLACE DURING THE PAST WEEK
IN THE MONSOON'S GENERALLY WEAK PERFORMANCE. CONCERN IS BEING
EXPRESSED NOT ONLY ABOUT THIS FALL'S KHARIF CROPS BUT ALSO ABOUT
PLANTING CONDITIONS IN REGARD TO THE UPCOMING RABI CROPS. FOOD
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PAGE 02 NEW DE 12713 241335Z

AGITATIONS WERE REPORTED IN A NUMBER OF AREAS. INDIA IS CURRENTLY

ESTIMATED TO HAVE ARRANGED FOR ALMOST 2.8-2.9 MILLION TONS OF FOODGRAINS FOR IMPORT DURING JULY 74 THROUGH JANUARY 75.
END SUMMARY.

1. THERE WAS NO SUBSTANTIAL CHANGE IN OVERALL MONSOON ACTIVITY DURING THE WEEK ENDING SEPTEMBER 18 AS COMPARED TO THE WEEK ENDING SEPTEMBER 11. THE NUMBER OF WEATHER ZONE RECEIVING NORMAL OR ABOVE-NORMAL RAINFALL DURING THE TWO WEEKS REMAINED UNCHANGED AT 10 OUT OF A TOTAL OF 35. EXCEPT FOR WEST BENGAL EASTWARD, THE AREA FROM CENTRAL INDIAN NORTHWARD (EXCLUDING PARTS OF MAHARASHTRA) CONTINUED TO RECEIVE GENERALLY VERY DEFICIENT RAINFALL. IN THE SOUTH, TAMIL NADU, KERALA, AND MOST OF KARANTAKA RECEIVED GENERALLY NORMAL TO VERY HEAVY RAINFALL WITH ANDHRA PRADESH AND COASTAL KARNATAKA RECEIVING SUFFICIENT RAINFALL.

2. EXCLUDING WEST BENGAL AND AREAS FURTHER EASTWARD, MOST OF CENTRAL INDIA NORTHWARD HAS BEEN VERY DEFICIENT IN RAINFALL FOR THE LAST FOUR WEEKS. SOME AREAS SUCH AS PUNJAB, HARYANA, AND THE PLAINS OF WESTERN UTTAR PRADESH (WHICH ARE MAJOR RICE SURPLUS-PRODUCING AREAS) HAVE RECEIVED SCANTY OR NO RAINFALL FOR THE LAST FIVE WEEKS OR LONGER. GUJARAT AND PARTS OF OTHER STATES CONTINUE TO FACE DROUGHT CONDITIONS.

3. CONCERN IS BEGINNING TO BE EXPRESSED ABOUT THE POSSIBLE UNFAVORABLE PLANTING CONDITIONS FOR THE UPCOMING RABI CROP, THE BULK OF WHICH IS PLANTED DURING THE LATTER PART OF OCTOBER TO MID-DECEMBER. ADDITIONAL RAINS ARE NEEDED TO IMPROVE SOIL MOISTURE CONDITIONS, ESPECIALLY IN THE CENTRAL AND NORTHERN AREAS OF INDIA (SEE PARA2) WHERE WHEAT IS GROWN.

4. PRICES OF ESSENTIAL COMMODITIES INCLUDING FOODGRAINS CONTINUE THEIR UPWARD MARCH. CONGEN BOMBAY REPORTS THAT PRICES OF 21 SELECTED ESSENTIAL ITEMS IN BOMBAY HAVE RISEN APPROXIMATELY 56PERCENT SINCE SEPTEMBER 1972. TENSION IS SAID TO BE MOUNTING BECAUSE MANY DAILY NECESSITIES ARE BEING PRICED OUT REACH OF THE LOWER AND MIDDLE CLASSES.

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PAGE 03 NEW DE 12713 241335Z

5. BECAUSE OF THE CONTINUED WORSENING OF THE GENERAL FOOD SUPPLY/ PRICE SITUATION, FOOD AGITATIONS AND DEMONSTRATIONS WERE REPORTED IN A
NUMBER OF AREAS. CONGEN CALCUTTA REPORTS THAT DURING THE PAST WEEK THERE HAVE BEEN SEVERAL LAW AND ORDER PROBLEMS RELATING TO FOOD IN THE SOUTHERN DISTRICTS OF WEST BENGAL. THREE TRAINS WERE LOOTED AND GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS WERE "GHERAOED" BY VILLAGERS. ACCORDING TO REPORTS, DEMONSTRATORS CONTINUED TO BE ON

THE RAMPAGE IN THE DHOLPUR DISTRICT OF RAJASTHAN. AT TWO PLACES IN ORISSA, AGITATORS LOOTED GRAIN SHOPS AND CAUSED DAMAGE TO PRIVATE AND GOVERNMENT PROPERTY NECESSITATING POLICE ACTION INCLUDING USE OF TEARGAS SHELLS. FOOD AGITATIONS WERE ALSO REPORTED IN PARTS OF UTTAR PRADESH, MADHYA PRADE , AND GUJARAT.

6. INDIA HAS LINED UP SUBSTANTIAL FOODGRAIN IMPORTS. WE CURRENTLY ESTIMATE THAT AS OF THE FIRST PART OF SEPTEMBER, INDIA HAS IMPORTED OR CONTRACTED TO IMPORT FROM JULY 1974 TO JANUARY 1975 APPROXIMATELY 2.76-2.86 MILLION METRIC TONS, INCLUDING REOUGHLY 1.83 MILLION METRIC TONS OF WHEAT FROM THE U. S., 430,000 TONS OF MILO AND 150,000 TONS OF WHEAT FROM ARGENTINA (WITH POSSIBLY ANOTHER 100,000 TONS OF WHEAT BOUGHT JUST PRIOR TO THE ARGENTINA GRAIN BOARD'S TEMPORARY SUSPENSION OF EXPORT SALES), 215,000 TONS OF WHEAT FROM CANADA, INCLUDING APPROXIMATELY 140,000 TONS ON GRANT TERMS, 40,000 TONS OF GRANT WHEAT FROM AUSTRALIA, AND 100,000 TONS OF RUSSIAN LOAN WHEAT. AS WE HAVE REPORTED PREVIOUSLY, INDIA IS ATTEMPTING TO CONTRACT FOR SUBSTANTIAL ADDITIONAL QUANTITIES. SCHNEIDER

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